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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [KDEM](#) [KWMN](#) [IR](#) [IS](#) [QT](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: JORDAN: CODEL ACKERMAN FOCUSED ON REGIONAL
SECURITY ISSUES AND COOPERATION

Classified By: Ambassador R. Stephen Beecroft for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

¶1. (C) On May 27-28, Representative Gary Ackerman, D-NY, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative Sheila Jackson-Lee, D-TX, Representative Keith Ellison, D-MN, and Subcommittee Staff Director Howard Diamond visited Jordan. During their meetings, King Abdullah, Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh, and General Mohammad Raqqad, Chief of the General Intelligence Directorate (GID) stressed the urgent need for concrete and visible progress on the Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations. While they appreciate the tone of recent statements from Washington, all agreed that the Arab public will quickly lose faith if words are not followed by action. Another theme in the CODEL's discussions was Iran and Jordanian interlocutors agreed that it could potentially play a destabilizing role in the region. Finally, Rep. Ackerman thanked each group for their excellent cooperation with the U.S., particularly on security issues, and assured them of Congress's strong support for Jordan. End Summary.

King Abdullah Says Concrete Actions Are Needed Now

¶2. (C) Upon arrival, the delegation met with Chief of the Royal Court Nasser Lozi and Royal Advisor Ayman Safadi. King Abdullah joined and proceeded to outline his activities since returning from Washington in April. He has hosted Syrian FM Mu'Allem, Palestinian Authority (PA) President Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu for discussions in Jordan. He has traveled to Saudi Arabia (KSA), Egypt and Syria for consultations with their leaders. He also announced his intention to travel to the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain on June 2. Finally, he explained that Jordan was now also reaching out to North African leaders. Algerian President Bouteflika had responded by offering to assist in advancing peace in the region. The King said that he has been using all of these meetings to brief on his own discussions in Washington and to build support and momentum for President Obama.

¶3. (C) He expressed concern about his discussions with Netanyahu, who said he required more time to consolidate his own position domestically. According to the King, if the Israelis cannot come out publicly with positive statements, it is imperative that the U.S. do so. "Otherwise, the Arabs will become disheartened very quickly." He said concrete actions are needed urgently, not only to satisfy Arab public opinion, but also to convince the King's fellow Arab leaders that progress is possible. Congressman Ackerman agreed that Netanyahu is under pressure and that the issue of "natural growth" for the settlements will be a particularly difficult one to solve domestically.

¶4. (C) Turning to Iran, the King said that he believes Iran

(and its proxy Hizballah) have been quiet recently because they are confident of a strong performance in the June 7 Lebanese parliamentary elections. After the election, there could be an increase in Iranian-sponsored activity in the region. The King also believes that delays in the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks will embolden Iran and convince certain Gulf states that it could be in their own best interest to begin cultivating a closer relationship with Tehran.

¶5. (C) Summing up, the King again stressed the importance of concrete progress. "Talks will strengthen the PA and diminish Hamas. Delays will embolden Iran and its proxies." He said there is no time to lose as many people will start forming their opinions in June or July of this year. The King said his own ability to advocate for harmony and unity among his Arab neighbors could be negatively impacted by delays.

¶6. (C) Congressman Ackerman warmly thanked the King for his leadership and friendship with the U.S. He asked the King if he believed the PA could retake control of Gaza. The King believes that a PA strengthened by successful peace talks would become more popular, representative of the people, and able to exert control in Gaza. Hamas will lose its reason for being if peace talks succeed.

¶7. (C) Congresswoman Jackson-Lee followed up with a question about KSA's financial support for the PA. The King responded that he had been trying, at many levels, to correct misinformation that KSA funds had been used by the PA to purchase weapons.

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¶8. (C) In addition to regional security questions, Congressman Ellison asked the King to consider partnering with well-known Minnesota companies that specialize in water resource management.

Themes Echoed in Discussion with the FM

¶9. (C) In honor of the CODEL, Foreign Minister Judeh hosted a breakfast and also included Minister for Planning and International Cooperation Suhair Al Ali, Ambassador Omar al Rifai, President of the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy, Samer Naber, Deputy Director of the U.S. Office at the MFA, and Ambassador Bisher Khasawneh, Director of the FM's personal office.

¶10. (C) Both the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations and Iran were discussed at the breakfast. The FM believes that, although the two issues should be taken into account simultaneously, there must be progress on the former before the international community can effectively address the threats posed by the latter. "Iran is able to capitalize on the frustration of the Muslim street. Results that reduce cynicism and frustration will damage Iran's position and its ability to influence the hearts and minds of others."

CODEL Expresses Appreciation for GID Cooperation

¶11. (C) Finally, the delegation met with General Mohammed Raqqad, Chief of the GID. The delegation thanked Raqqad for his cooperation and assured him that the U.S. Congress would continue to provide resources in support of our bilateral agenda. Raqqad was appreciative and reiterated key areas of concern mentioned by previous interlocutors. In great detail, Raqqad stressed the need for immediate and concrete action to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "The Arab street is looking for progress, not process." He also concurred when CODEL members stated that Iranian intentions were unclear and could pose a threat to stability in the region.

¶12. (U) CODEL Ackerman was unable to clear this cable before departing Jordan.
Beecroft